REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Reconsideration and allowance of the application in light of the arguments herein is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3-10 and 13-20 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, the examiner has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Since Applicants believe that claims 1-2 and 11-12 are allowable as well, applicants have not amended. Applicants thank the examiner for finding allowable subject matter and ask for reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-2 and 11-12.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1-2 and 11-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent number 6,700,420 to Spehar ("Spehar"). According to the office action, Spehar discloses all claimed features as shown in FIG. 2.

The present invention relates to the problem of flank or edge steepness when providing digital signals as an output, such as to the output of an output driver.

Spehar actually relates to a structure which converts a single input signal to a differential output signal (column 1, lines 21-24). In such a structure, the single input signal is processed in two different paths to generate the differential output signal. However, since delay in the two paths is not the same, skew may occur.

To solve the problem of skew, Spehar proposes to use synchronization circuits 34, 26 (FIG. 2) which may be capacitors as shown in FIG. 3A. As described at column 2, line 52 to column 3, line 48 of Spehar, these synchronization circuits slow down one of the paths—the path which would have less delay without the synchronization circuits—to provide synchronized signals to an output driver 32. Thus, Spehar relates to the input of an output driver.

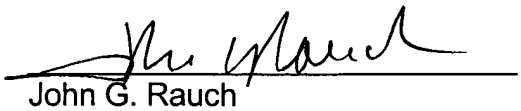
Accordingly, Spehar on one hand and the present invention defined by claims 1-20 on the other hand relate to two different aspects of a driver circuit. Spehar proposes a circuit to provide an input signal with reduced skew to the output driver, while the present invention defined by claims 1 and 11 teaches temporarily increasing the output of the output driver, with a corresponding signal being provided via a capacitor. In principle, it would be possible to combine the disclosure of Spehar with the teaching of the present invention to provide a driver which has both reduced skew and increased edge steepness.

Thus, Spehar does not show, describe or suggest the limitations of independent claims 1 and 11, namely to temporarily increase the current flowing via an output of the driver stage in synchronization with the edges of at least one trigger signal of the driver stage, wherein the increased current is provided via a capacitor to increase the output current of the driver stage. Spehar only teaches use of capacitors for synchronizing two paths which serve to supply the driver stage.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 11 are allowable over the prior art of record. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is respectfully requested.

With this response, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the examiner deem a telephone conference to be of assistance in advancing the application to allowance, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,



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